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CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE BRITISH ARCHIVES
CONCERNING TEXAS, 1837-1846

VII

EDITED BY EPHRAIM DOUGLASS ADAMS

DOYLE TO ELLIOT¹

[Enclosure.]

Mexico, 27 May. 1843.

Copy.

Charles Elliot.

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that at an interview which took place with His Excellency the President General Santa Aña on the 24th Instant, He spoke to me a good deal about the present position of this Country with Texas, and added that He was ready to treat upon the terms proposed by him and forwarded through Mr Robinson, with which you are acquainted. I pressed him as much as possible with respect to the fallacy of the plan with respect to the Sovereignty of Mexico being acknowledged by Texas; but at present He does not seem at all inclined to give way on that point.

*I further stated to him how useless I felt it would be to send Commissioners to treat on any terms so long as the present warfare was carried on; and His Excellency has Authorized me to acquaint you for the information of General Houston, that He will agree to an Armistice, and He told me he would at once give orders for a total cessation of hostilities on his part, and requested that General Houston would send similar orders to the different Officers Commanding the Texian forces; and that in such case He was ready to receive any Commissioners which might be sent from Texas to treat on the terms proposed by him*²

I am of the same opinion with yourself respecting the total fallacy and impolicy of that part of the plan of the President Santa Aña claiming an empty Sovereignty over Texas, but as I

¹F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.

²This paragraph only is printed in Garrison, *Diplomatic Correspondence of the Republic of Texas*, III, 1091; in *Am. Hist. Assoc. Report*, 1908, II. "The portion of this Despatch contained within the crosses [asterisks], is the portion which has been communicated to the Government of Texas.—CHARLES ELLIOT."

collected from your Correspondence how important you felt it to be that an armistice should be granted, and even intimated that a large party in Texas with a view of doing what they thought best for them at the present moment might accept General Santa Aña's proposition, I felt it my duty to accept the offer He made and acquainted him that I would write to you on this Matter without loss of time.

I have by the last packet informed Lord Aberdeen of what has taken place.

Percy Doyle.

To Captain Charles Elliot, R. N.

[Endorsed]. Inclosure No 1 in Capt. Elliot's despatch No. 12. to the Earl of Aberdeen. Galveston June 10th 1843.

ELLIOT TO ABERDEEN³

No. 13.

Galveston June 21st 1843.

My Lord,

Thinking it possible that Her Majesty's Sloop "Scylla" may catch the Mail of the 29th at Vera Cruz, I have the honor to forward by her the accompanying Copy of the Proclamation of Armistice issued by this Government.⁴

But as it seems probable that my Communication through the United States will reach England before the Mail from Mexico I shall transmit the Correspondence connected with this Affair through the usual channel.

Charles Elliot

To The Earl of Aberdeen, K. T.

Downing Street

ELLIOT TO ABERDEEN⁵

No. 15.⁶

Galveston, June 22nd 1843.

My Lord,

Having reference to my dispatch No. 12 of the 10th Instant I have now the honor to transmit to Your Lordship the reply of the

³F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.

⁴A proclamation suspending hostilities with Mexico, June 15, 1843. Printed in *Niles' Register*, LXIV, 307.

⁵F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.

⁶No. 14, Elliot to Aberdeen, on the whereabouts of Mr. John Orr, has been omitted.

Secretary of State of this Republic to my Note to him,⁷ a Copy of which was forwarded in the despatch No. 12.

I beg also to transmit a Copy of the Proclamation of the Armistice issued by the President of Texas, and a Copy of the despatch I addressed to Mr. Doyle in reply to his of the 27th Ultimo, a Copy of which has already been forwarded to Your Lordship in my despatch No 12.

I also avail myself of this occasion to acknowledge Your Lordship's despatch No. 5 of the 10th Ultimo,⁸ and to transmit a Copy of the note I have thereupon addressed to Mr. Jones.⁹

Charles Elliot.

To The Earl of Aberdeen, K. T.

Downing Street

ELLIOT TO DOYLE¹⁰

[Enclosure].

Galveston June 21st 1843.

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge Your despatch of the 27th Ultimo by Her Majesty's Sloop "Scylla" (received here upon the night of the 9 Instant) and in reply I beg leave to transmit to you.

1st. Copy of a Note from myself to the Secretary of State of this Republic, dated on the 10th Instant.¹¹

2d. Copy of the reply of the Secretary of State to my Note of the 10th Instant, dated 15th Instant.¹²

3d. An authentic Copy of a Proclamation of Armistice by the President of Texas, dated 15 Instant.¹³

I trust that it will be in your power to induce the President of Mexico to accede to the arrangement made by this Government respecting the duration of the Armistice pending the Negotiations for peace, and till due notice of a determination to renew hostili-

⁷Jones to Elliott, June 15, 1843. In Garrison, *Diplomatic Correspondence of the Republic of Texas*, III, 1092-1093; in *Am. Hist. Assoc. Report*, 1908, II.

⁸The correct date for Aberdeen's No. 5 is May 18, 1843.

⁹Elliott to Jones, June 18, 1843. In Garrison, *Diplomatic Correspondence of the Republic of Texas*, III, 1096-1097; in *Am. Hist. Assoc. Report*, 1908, II.

¹⁰F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.

¹¹Elliott to Jones, June 10, 1843. In Garrison, *Diplomatic Correspondence of the Republic of Texas*, III, 1090; in *Am. Hist. Assoc. Report*, 1908, II.

¹²See Note 7 above.

¹³See Note 4, page 68.

ties upon the part of either Government should be given to the other through Her Majesty's Representatives in Mexico and Texas. It is satisfactory to me to find that your opinions are concurrent with my own upon the fallacy and impolicy of that part of General Santa Aña's plan claiming an empty Sovereignty over Texas, and thinking it possible that your dates from England may not be so recent as my own, and that it may be convenient to you at this Con-juncture to know the impressions of Her Majesty's Government upon the propositions sent on to this Country by Mr Robinson, I have herewith the honor to transmit to you the Copy of a despatch from Lord Aberdeen, received three days since, dated upon the 18th Ultimo.¹⁴

I would remark, here, that there has been some misconception as to any opinion upon my part that a large party in Texas with a view of doing what they thought best for them at the present moment, might accept General Santa Aña's proposition. I remarked indeed in a private communication to Mr Packenham that it would not surprise me to find the project temporarily favored, and I have heard that was the Case to a limited extent, and for a brief space of time, but it was not my belief that it would be countenanced for a moment by the Government of the Republic, or indeed steadily, by any considerable part of the people. My observations upon that part of the subject were intended generally to sustain my own impression that a cessation of hostilities was very desirable on every ground of consideration, and particularly till you could learn the views of Her Majesty's Government after these overtures should become known in that quarter.

It is to be hoped that the wise and becoming conduct of this Government in refusing to take part in the struggle in Yucatan and respecting the late unauthorised movement of the two Texian Vessels of War to that Coast from New Orleans, will facilitate an early and honorable close of this Contest.

In the state of understanding between Her Majesty's Government and that of The King of the French concerning the settlement of these differences I considered it suitable to communicate the subject of Your despatch to my Colleague Monsieur de Cramayel before I addressed this Government in relation to it, and He

¹⁴See Aberdeen to Elliot, No. 5, May 18, 1843. *THE QUARTERLY*, XVI 307.

concurred with me that every proper effort should be made to dispose the President to agree to the Armistice.

Charles Elliot.

Percy W. Doyle

H. M. Chargé d' Affaires, Mexico.

Copy.

Charles Elliot.

[Endorsed]. Inclosure No 3 in Captain Elliot's despatch No 15 to the Earl of Aberdeen. Galveston June 22d. 1843.

ELLIOT TO ABERDEEN¹⁵

No. 17.¹⁶

Galveston June 24th 1843.

My Lord,

I have the honor to forward Your Lordship some extracts from a private letter which I sent to Mr Doyle, with the reply to his despatch of the 27th Ultimo. The other parts of this letter need not be intruded upon Your Lordship; They referred to a request General Thompson had made to Mr. Doyle to see a private communication I had addressed to Mr. Packenham by the request of General Houston, upon the subject of the Prisoners taken at Mier, which Communication Mr Doyle had of course declined to shew to General Thompson.

I have also thought it convenient to forward with these despatches two Newspapers for Your Lordship's examination, the first (The "National Vindicator"¹⁷ which is the Government organ) containing the President's Instructions to the Commissioners sent on to New Orleans for the purpose of enforcing the orders upon Commodore Moore to return to this Port; and the Second (the "Civilian"¹⁸ by far the best conducted Journal and of most influence in the Country) containing some observations on the Armistice, deserving of attention.

Charles Elliot

To The Earl of Aberdeen, K. T.

Downing Street.

¹⁵F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.

¹⁶No. 16, Elliot to Aberdeen, reporting that he has received from Texas £3 15s 9d for supplies furnished the schooner *San Bernard*, has been omitted.

¹⁷Issue of June 3, 1843.

¹⁸The *Civilian and Galveston City Gazette*, June 24, 1843.

ELLIOT TO DOYLE¹⁹

Extracts from a private letter from Captain Elliot to Percy W. Doyle, Esqr. Mexico. dated at Galveston June 21st 1843.

No. 1. "My despatch will make you acquainted with General Houston's acceptance of the Armistice, and I hope you will have no difficulty in inducing General Santa Aña to accede to the usual and reasonable arrangements General Houston has made respecting the duration of the Armistice. I do sincerely hope that these advances, on all sides, may be improved into a speedy and honorable pacification, and however great the relief to this Country will be, it seems manifest to me that it will be of higher permanent advantage to Mexico. For I firmly believe that it is in General Santa Aña's power, by speedy, wise, and liberal arrangements with Texas, upon the basis of it's independence, pretty rapidly to detach it from it's intimate connexion with the people and things East of the Sabine, to the great increase and security of the just and powerful influence of his own Country on this Continent. With a comprehensive policy on his part, steadily directed to these ends, Texas would settle to a considerable extent by emigration from England, Germany and France; And a people will be placed between the United States and Mexico, whose interest it will be not merely to maintain a Neutral attitude, in the event of dispute with that Country (which would draw a large portion of the foreign trade with Mexico into the ports of Texas) but rather to lean to the side of Mexico. For independent Texas will be in many respects a rival producing Country with the United States, and will soon come to feel that it is more likely the United States should stretch Westward over Texas, than that Mexico should stretch Eastward over Texas. I should tell you that there is no reason whatever to believe that the present Government of Texas has any undue feelings of partiality towards the United States. There is no bias that way, and the late honorable conduct of President Houston concerning the movements of the Texian Squadron to the Coast of Yucatan may also serve to help out a happy conclusion of this Contest; the continuance of which is filling this Country with desperadoes from every part of the South, eager to penetrate into Mexico and bidding

¹⁹F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.

fair to turn the Gulf of Mexico into a piratical cruising ground. General Santa Aña is preventing the settlement of this Country by people disposed to be peaceful and orderly, and filling it pretty fast with a class of persons, the fellows of whom I do not believe are to be found on the face of the Globe. The sounder policy will be to make a very liberal peace with Texas, and to strengthen the hands of this Government by every kind of friendly Countenance. Such a course would roll back a tide of mischief East of the Sabine, and a contrary will as surely induce a high flood West of it."

"Speaking of the late movement upon Yucatan by the Ships, I cannot refrain from observing, that it was much more a United States, or at all events a New Orleans expedition, than a Texian. This Government was conscientiously, and extremely averse to it, did all that it could to prevent it, and all that it could to put an end to it, regardless of shameful abuse both in the United States and here, and much worse, be it observed, in the United States, than here. The Expedition sailed from New Orleans, was mainly assisted by Citizens of this place, and has I believe been recently reinforced by Volunteers raised in that City; and all this though it was notorious that Commodore Moore was acting in total disobedience of the orders of his Government. If the Government of the United States, could have prevented these things they surely ought to have done so, and if they could not, their powerlessness is very dangerous to their Neighbours, and deplorable for themselves."

2d. "The plain fact is that General Houston is very unpopular in the United States and here, because of his moderate policy with regard to Mexico, and particularly since his determined opposition to these purposes of interference in the Affairs of Yucatan."

"These feelings of ill will to him are aggravated by the impression that his wise and moderate conduct is agreeable to Her Majesty's Government, and well calculated to strengthen their efforts for a speedy and peaceful Settlement of this Contest. This is the true cause of all the bitterness towards him in the United States, and I happen to know that General Thompson has very particular friends in that Country, most particularly hostile to General Houston. Putting all these things together you will not wonder that I should earnestly beg that there may be no relaxation of your just reserve respecting the exhibition of my private letters to General Thompson."

3d. "The American Government and it's functionaries need careful handling in this Texian matter. Be assured that the adjustment of this question on the basis of the independence of Texas, is ill liked in the United States, particularly through the help of our own and other European Governments. These good folks desire to keep it an open question, as well for the chances of the future incorporation of Texas with the Union, as because it serves as a sort of *raw* upon Mexico, whenever there is any hesitation about American demands upon that Country. This reflection leads me to think that it will be very advantageous if you can persuade the Mexican Government to adopt the principle of General Houston's arrangement with respect to the duration of the Armistice. If the duration of the Armistice depended in any way upon the good offices of American Officers near either Government, it is to be apprehended that it might not last long enough for any permanent useful purpose"

Copy. Charles Elliot.

[Endorsed] Inclosure in Captain Elliot's despatch to the Earl of Aberdeen No 17. Galveston June 24. 1843.

ELLIOT TO ABERDEEN²¹

No. 18.

Galveston July 4th. 1843.

My Lord,

I have the honor to transmit a note from Mr. Jones,²² in reply to the note I addressed to him upon the 18th Ultimo communicating assurances of the continued interest felt by Her Majesty's Government in the prosperity and independence of Texas, and of the full determination to persevere in efforts for the peaceful adjustment of the difficulties between this Country and Mexico, whenever a hope of success should present itself.

With this communication I have also received private letters from General Houston, and Mr. Jones expressive of an earnest desire for the appointment of a British Consular Agent at Corpus Christi. General Houston thinks that "the effect would be very

²¹F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.

²²Jones to Elliot, June 28, 1843. In Garrison, *Diplomatic Correspondence of the Republic of Texas*, III, 1097, in *Am. Hist. Assoc. Report*, 1908, II.

beneficial upon the dispositions of the Mexicans as well as the Texians, and even upon the Indians, who have recently depredated upon the poor families at that point. The Irish families who have claimed to be British Subjects will derive confidence, and resume their former habitations, and pursue the arts of peace with delight and Advantage. I doubt not, but what the United States will support a Consul at Corpus Christi." Mr. Jones thinks that a flourishing trade will soon grow up in that quarter with the neighbouring Mexican Settlements, and looks to the increase and security of Commercial intercourse, as the surest means of establishing the steady pacification of the frontier.

I shall inform the President and Mr. Jones that my Instructions prevent me from making the desired appointment without Your Lordship's sanction, but that I am persuaded the President's wishes will always have great weight with Her Majesty's Government.

Aransas Inlet, and Corpus Christi Bay, are situated at the Mouth of the river "Nueces," and formed the Western limit of Texas, proper, according to the Spanish and Mexican divisions of the Country. It's contiguity to the San Patricio Settlements, alluded to by the President, will probably recommend this suggestion to your Lordship's consideration

Charles Elliot.

To The Earl of Aberdeen, K. T.

Downing Street

ELLIOT TO ABERDEEN²³

No. 19.

Galveston July 15th 1843.

My Lord,

The Inclosures form a Correspondence, which I have recently had with a Gentleman of the name of Yates, a Citizen of this Republic, resident in this place. It arose from a letter He had addressed to a Mr. S. Converse in London dated on the 19th March last (of which I heard for the first time two day's since) recently published at Boston, and republished at New Orlenas.²⁴

²³F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.

²⁴Yates' letter to Converse, widely printed in American newspapers, created the impression that he was writing with Elliot's authority, and that Great Britain was actively interested in procuring abolition in Texas. Smith, *Annexation of Texas*, 113.

The impressions that the abolition of Slavery in this Republic, would be agreeable in England, and that it would be practicable to raise a loan there on the Security of the lands in Texas, in furtherance of that object, are probably entertained by many persons in this Country. But whether such views be well founded or not, it is the fact that Mr. Yates has been conveying to Mr. Converse his own inferences and impressions in these particulars, and not what I said to him; and Your Lordship will observe that He has ascribed the different turn of his letter to Mr. Converse, to the haste of that Communication; which would no doubt have been avoided if He had supposed it would find it's way before the public.

It is the case as Mr. Yates observes that I was on board the Steam Boat on the passage from Houston with my Colleague Monsieur de Cramayel, on the occasion to which He alludes, though I did not hear the address of which He speaks. But I did not consider that the excitement prevailing here at that time was otherwise than temporary; and I do not perceive that it formed part of my duty to report every casual ebullition of popular Sentiment, on Subjects of internal interest, in my despatches to Her Majesty's Government. I have conversed with my Colleague since upon the subject, more than once, and I believe his opinions were coincident with my own, as to the temporary character of the excitement manifested on that occasion; and perhaps, it may not be amiss to add that we both of us ventured to suggest to the Gentleman who was coming to Galveston to test the state of public feeling here, that He might expose himself to some degree of danger, by the abrupt introduction of such a Subject, on the people of this Town.

That the opinions of Mr. Yates and those who think like him, are founded upon sound conceptions of what would most conduce to the strength and durable prosperity of this Republic, is certainly my belief. But I have never given any warrant for the use of my name on such subjects, and certainly never said what has been imputed to me.

Charles Elliot

The Earl of Aberdeen, K. T.
Downing Street

YATES TO ELLIOT²⁵

[Enclosure.] Copy. Charles Elliot. Galveston July 12th. 1843.

To Captain Charles Elliot.

Sir—

I was much surprised to receive by the Steamer which arrived this Morning a Copy of the "New Orleans Republican" of July 3d containing a letter purporting to have been written by me to S. Converse, Esqre. of London, which was preceded by a letter from a London Correspondent of the Boston Post, and some editorial remarks reflecting on yourself, and the Government you have the honor to represent in a most unwarrantable manner, and in which my letter was referred to as Authority for the correctness of those remarks.

Without reflecting on the impropriety of my Correspondent in publishing that letter, I feel it a matter of duty to place in your hands without delay, and as far as in my power a full exculpation from the charges thus made or insinuated.

In my letter to Mr. Converse under date of 19th March last, speaking on the subject of emancipating the Negroes of Texas, the following expression occurs "I had also held several conversations with the British Minister here, and from him I learned that such a Measure would secure for us the warmest support from the British Government, in our present Struggle, and also the means of paying for our Slaves, by their Citizens giving lands in exchange"

The Writer of the London letter under date of June 2d, says "I enclose the Copy of a letter received here by the last Steamer from Galveston, in which you will see that the British Minister in Texas has been endeavouring to persuade the people of that Republic, that if they will alter their constitution so as to abolish Slavery, then this government will aid them in their Struggle with Mexico, and furnish the Money to pay for their Slaves, the Texians giving lands, &c, &c".

My letter to Mr. Converse was written in much haste after the arrival of the Houston Boat referred to, in it, which occurred at a very late hour on Saturday Night, and the Steamer sailed for New Orleans on the Morning of the following day. Mr. S. P.

²⁵F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.

Andrews of Houston and some others came passengers in the Houston Boat, with the avowed intention of ascertaining the feelings of the Citizens of Galveston on the Subject, *not of abolition*, but of gradual emancipation of Slaves, and on the representations of himself and his Associate I was induced to write in the strong and encouraging terms used in that letter. With respect to yourself and the efforts you have made to persuade the people of Texas, to entertain such a project it is due from me to you to say that as far as my knowledge and your communication to me extends, you have stated distinctly that you were instructed by your Government to interfere in no manner with the internal institutions and regulations of this Government; and that *in answer to my enquiries*, you stated your private opinion as an individual, that such a measure (which I intimated as probable) would be gratifying to the British Nation, and secure for this her ardent support, and that there were parties in England who felt so deeply interested on the subject, that you believed such might be found who would advance the Capital necessary to purchase our Negroes, for the purpose of manumission, and that they would receive our lands in exchange on the assurance of a prohibition to the further importation of Slaves.

As you were a passenger on board the Houston Boat at the time I have mentioned, and witnessed the state of feeling which then existed amongst the passengers on that trip, and must have heard the address made to them by a distinguished Citizen, on their way down warmly advocating the Measure I presumed you would advise Your Government of the state of feeling which you then saw evinced, and therefore stated in my letter to Mr. S. Converse that I had reason to believe you had communicated on the Subject. You never have stated to me those communications, or any part of them; and I did not see you after your arrival from Houston, previous to the departure of the packet, for New Orleans, the suggestion on this point was therefore only conjecture on my part.

As to the intervention of Your Government in our Affairs with Mexico, emanating from a desire to promote the abolition of Slavery here, and it's being exerted as a consideration for such a Measure, the statement is too publicly destitute of foundation to need a refutation. Those who know anything of the foreign relations of this Government are aware of the fact that the inter-

vention of the Government of Great Britain has been pledged to us by treaty stipulation, near three years since, and without the most remote reference to this Subject, and that it has since been most efficiently exerted in our behalf.

The London Correspondent and the New Orleans Editor have alluded to the true cause of the difficulty. They evidently care but little for Texas "her weal or woe" but are willing to sacrifice her prosperity and welfare to the protection of the Slave property held in the States on her frontier. This country has been in a great measure governed and controlled by this influence, and it was to avoid it that I stated in my letter that the emancipation must be incidentally laid before a Convention of the people, in order to ensure success, and not because of the opposition I feared it would meet with at home.

There is no reason for the alarm these writers have expressed because if Texas should entertain the project, She will afford the Slave holders of the Union a better protection for their Slave property, by treaty, than they now have from their Sister States.

Sir, I am no *abolitionist*, nor am I, nor have I ever been, nor can I be in correspondence with any, for the purpose of promoting their views, but I do believe that free labor is ten fold more productive of prosperity in this, or any enlightened country, than Slave labour, and it is for this reason I desire to see the introduction to this Country of free White industrious families of the laboring Classes, well satisfied that they will eventually supersede the Slave; and gradually but surely remove the incubus that rests upon us. This change must be a voluntary and a gradual one, and I have uniformly advocated the doctrine that a Government composed as ours is can only prohibit the further introduction of Slaves, and having provided the means for the purchase of those already introduced, must leave it optional with the proprietor to sell or retain at pleasure, and I sincerely believe that such a provision being made, Texas would become a free State, by the unanimous will of the Citizens, in ten years thereafter.

In conclusion permit me to assure you that while I sincerely regret the occasion for this letter, I cannot but feel happy in the opportunity it affords me of bearing my humble testimony to the uniform expression of your desire for the prosperity of my Country, the firm conviction that your official as well as private inter-

course has contributed much to promote that object, and that in so doing I express the sentiments of a large Majority of my fellow Citizens.

A. J. Yates.

[Endorsed]. Inclosure No. 1 in Captain Elliot's Despatch No 19. to the Earl of Aberdeen. July 15. 1843.

ELLIOT TO YATES²⁶

Private

Galveston July 13th. 1843.

Sir.

I beg to acknowledge your letter of Yesterday's date founded upon a letter from you to Mr. S. Converse, recently published in Boston.

Whenever the subject matter of that communication has been mentioned to me in conversation, either by you, or any other Gentleman of my acquaintance in the Republic, I have invariably made the remark to which you advert, namely, that I was instructed to interfere in no manner with the internal institutions or regulations of this Government.

But either in doing that, or in denying the unfounded charge of undue interference, I have always guarded myself from being supposed to entertain different opinions upon the general subject, from those held by the great body of my Countrymen.

Sensible, however of the inconvenience of any misconception on such a point I have also always said to others what I said to you; that is, that what fell from me must be particularly understood to be no more than the expression of my own individual opinion, for I had neither knowledge of, nor authority to speak to, opinions or feelings in any other quarter I can readily understand [in] the hurry of your Communication to Mr. S. Converse you intended to convey your own impressions founded upon your conversation with me, and not my expressions. But at all events I entertain

²⁶F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.

no doubt that you will take some suitable means of preventing further misconception, so far as I am concerned.

Copy. Charles Elliot.

Charles Elliot.

A. J. Yates, Esqre.

Galveston.

[Endorsed.] Inclosure No. 2 in Captain Elliot's Despatch No. 19, to the Earl of Aberdeen, July 15th 1843.

YATES TO ELLIOT²⁷

[Enclosure].

Private.

To Captain Charles Elliot.

Galveston.

Sir,

Your favor of the 13th Instant in reply to my letter of the letter [*Sic*] of 12th is before me.

That portion of my letter to Mr. Converse, under date 19th March last, which refers to conversations held with you on the subject therein alluded to was intended and can certainly be considered as nothing more than an expression of inferences drawn by me from your remarks, and in the excitement which then existed in this Community, I am free to acknowledge that those inferences were not warranted so much by your expressions, as by my own knowledge of the dispositions and feelings of your Countrymen on the Subject.

So far from understanding you to say that the British Government were disposed to interfere with the question of Slavery in this Country, I distinctly recollect your reiterated declaration that you had been positively instructed to avoid any interference with our Civil and domestic institutions.

I shall avail myself of the earliest opportunity to remove the misconstruction put upon my letter to Mr. Converse in relation to yourself, and the misconception of the part you have taken in the matter which seems to be entertained by some and founded on expressions contained in that letter.

Sincerely hoping that no inconvenience may result to yourself from the temporary prevalence of erroneous impressions, which

²⁷F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.

may be entertained by a few individuals in regard to the course you have pursued, and which can be so readily removed, I have the honor to be with Sentiments of the highest respect and consideration

A. J. Yates.

Galveston July 15. 1843.

Copy. Charles Elliot

[Endorsed.]. Inclosure No. 3 in Capn. Elliot's Despatch No. 19 to the Earl of Aberdeen. July 15th. 1843.

ELLIOT TO ABERDEEN²⁸

No. 20.

Galveston July 16th. 1843.

My Lord,

I have had the honor to receive Your Lordship's despatches Nos. 6 and 7.

This Government has not yet appointed Commissioners to proceed to Mexico; pausing, till it shall be ascertained whether General Santa Aña has adopted General Houston's arrangement with respect to the duration of the Armistice. It is much to be hoped that the Mexican Government will not insist upon the immediate and unqualified acknowledgment of the Sovereignty of Mexico, as an indispensable preliminary condition to the opening of negotiations, but content itself with an expression of general readiness upon the part of this Government maturely to consider any scheme of adjustment which may be proposed, upon the part of Mexico.

With a continued state of pacification, and the lapse of time, feelings of irritation will naturally subside; and both parties addressing themselves to the task in a spirit of temperate enquiry I should hope that there are no insuperable obstacles to the settlement of this dispute upon a durable and creditable footing, and certainly upon terms of advantage to Mexico which there is no ground to believe could be secured by a protraction of the Contest.

I avail myself of this occasion to announce the return of the Texian Ships of War "Austin" and "Wharton" to this port, from the Coast of Yucatan, reporting intelligence that the difficulties

²⁸F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.

in that quarter, are not yet adjusted. The Vessels arrived on the 14th. Instant.

Charles Elliot.

The Earl of Aberdeen, K. T.

ELLIOT TO ABERDEEN²⁹

No. 21.

Galveston July 29th. 1843.

My Lord.

With reference to my despatch No. 19, I have now to solicit Your Lordship's attention to a letter⁵⁰ addressed by Mr. Yates to the Editor of the same New Orleans print, in which his letter to Mr. Converse of the 19th. March last was recently Copied from a Boston paper.

Charles Elliot.

The Earl of Aberdeen, K. T.

ELLIOT TO ABERDEEN³¹

No. 22.

Galveston August 3rd. 1843.

My Lord,

Her Majesty's Sloop. "Scylla" returned to this anchorage on the 23rd Ultimo, bringing me despatches from Her Majesty's Chargé d' Affaires in Mexico dated on the 8th Idem, and I have now the honor to transmit to Your Lordship my subsequent correspondence with this Government,³² and that Gentleman.

I have also taken the liberty to forward some extracts from a private letter I have addressed to Mr. Doyle with these despatches. I may mention that I do not forward copies of Mr. Doyle's communications to me,³³ because I learn from him that they have already been transmitted through the United States.

Trusting that the present attitude of these Affairs will be satisfactory to Her Majesty's Government, I have the honor to remain,

Charles Elliot.

²⁹F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.

³⁰Yates to the *New Orleans Republican*, July 17, 1843.

³¹F. O. Texas, Vol. 6.

³²Elliot to Jones, July 24, 1843. In Garrison, *Diplomatic Correspondence of the Republic of Texas*, III, 1112-1113, in *Am. Hist. Assoc. Report*, 1908, II.

³³F. O., Mexico, 163. Doyle to Aberdeen, No. 51, July 30, 1843, enclosing copy of letter to Elliot of July 8, outlining Santa Anna's ideas as to an armistice.

Her Majesty's Sloop sailed to Vera Cruz, with my reply, last evening

Charles Elliot.

The Earl of Aberdeen. K. T.

ELLIOT TO DOYLE³⁴

[Enclosure.] Copy. Charles Elliot.

Galveston.

August 2nd. 1843.

Sir.

I have the honor to acknowledge your despatch of the 8th Ultimo. by H. M. S. "Scylla," and in reply beg leave to transmit to you,

1. Copy of a letter from myself to the Secretary of State of this Republic.³⁵
2. Copy of Mr. Jones's reply.³⁶
3. Copy of a despatch from the Secretary of War and Marine to General Wells.³⁷

I have also forwarded the Copy of a despatch which I have recently had the honor to receive from Lord Aberdeen dated on the 3rd Ultimo,³⁸ thinking it possible that you may not yet have received any despatches of so late a date at Mexico.

These moderate dispositions of the Government of Texas cannot fail to be satisfactory to the President of Mexico. But His Excellency will naturally have collected from public sources of information that General Houston is exposed to violent opposition in this Country on account of that Moderation, and it is much to be hoped that the Government of Mexico will have constant and

³⁴F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.

³⁵See note 32 above.

³⁶Jones to Elliot, July 30, 1843. In Garrison, *Diplomatic Correspondence of the Republic of Texas*, III, 1114-1115, in *Am. Hist. Assoc. Report*, 1908, II.

³⁷Woll to Houston, July 16, 1843, and Hill to Woll, July 29, 1843 (copies of which were enclosed in this letter and are here printed), are noted by Garrison as "not found." (*Diplomatic Correspondence of the Republic of Texas*, III, 1115, in *Am. Hist. Assoc. Report*, 1908, II.)

³⁸F. O., Texas, 19, Aberdeen to Elliot, No. 9. This was really a dispatch to Doyle (of which a copy was sent to Elliot) on Mexican threats with regard to foreigners in Texas. Elliot, therefore, sends a copy to Doyle, because mails to Texas were more regular than to Mexico.

very considerate regard to that state of things in the negotiations for the final adjustment of this painful and fruitless contest.

The release of the Texian prisoners in Mexico would have the effect of allaying angry feeling, and strengthening the influence of this Government for the attainment of its wise and moderate purposes: I believe too, that I cannot be saying too much in adding, that this step would be agreeable to Her Majesty's Government, and perhaps facilitate their dispositions to be helpful in the satisfactory settlement of this dispute.

In conclusion, I will take the liberty to express the hope and belief that General Santa Aña will fully avail himself of any becoming opportunity of reconciling his own personal and generous impulses toward these Prisoners, with the dictates of sound Policy, and a just consideration for the situation and wishes of this Government.

Charles Elliot.

Percy W Doyle Esquire.

Mexico

[Endorsed] Inclosure No 5 in Captain Elliot's Despatch to the Earl of Aberdeen. No. 22. August 3d, 1843.

WOLL TO HOUSTON³⁹

[Enclosure]

Cuerpo de ejercito del Norte, General en gefe.

Matamoros Julio 16 de 1843

Sor Gral Dn Samuel Houston

Muy Señor mio, Conforme á las ordenes del Supremo Gobierno que me anuncia há proclamado V. un Armisticio en Tejas me apresaré á manifestar á V, que daré las convenientes para que se suspendan por las tropas de Ejercito de mi Mando, las hostilidades contra Tejas Mandando retirar en todos los puntos de la linea las avansadas, descubiertos, y partidas de observacion que tenemos sobre dicha país, tan luego como se sirva V. anunciarme, que ha prevenido a las fuerzas que componen la expedicion de Santa Fé retrocedan inmediatamente suspendiendo toda hostilidad contra la Republica Mejicana, en el caso que dicha expedicion estuviere autorisada por Tejas—ó que se sirva hacer una declaracion oficial y solemne de que aquellos invasores no pertenean á Tejas, para

³⁹F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.

que en este ultimo caso puedan ser batidos perseguidos por los tropas Mejicanas en atencion á que no estan y no puedan estar comprendidos en el armisticio que estoy facultado para celebrar con V. ni en la consiguiente suspencion de hostilidades.

Por lo tanto, desio que á la mayor brevedad posible se sirva V. Contestar, y si como es de creerse la espedicion de Santa Fé no ha sido autorizada por V. y de consiguiente hace V. a nombre de Tejas la declaracion oficial y solemne ya mencionada será conveniente nombre V. los Comisionados que en Union de los que eligere por parte del Supremo Gobierno se ocupan de celebrar un armisticio entre las partes beligerentes.

La villa de Laredo pudiera ser el punto en que los Comisionados se reuniéron.

Aprovecho esta ocasion para opecer a V las seguridades de la distinguida consideracion de afecmo Servidor. I. S. M.

Adrian Woll.

Copy. Charles Elliot.

[Endorsed]. General Adrian Woll to General Houston. Matamoros 16th July 1843.

Inclosure No 4 to Captain Elliot's Despatch to the Earl of Aberdeen. August 3d, 1843.

HILL TO WOLL⁴⁰

[Enclosure]. Copy. Charles Elliot.

Department of War and Marine

Washington 29th July 1843.

To General Adrian Woll.

Commander in Chief of the Northern Army of Mexico.

Sir,

Your Communication of the 16th July addressed to General Sam Houston, President of the Republic of Texas was by him received on the 26th inst. and referred to this Department for consideration and reply.

Added to the facts set forth in your Communication, the President of the Republic of Texas having been informed through Her Britannic Majesty's Chargé d' Affaires near this Government that Authority had been given to you by President of the Republic of

⁴⁰F. O., Texas, Vol. 6.

Mexico, to act as Military Commissioner on the part of that Government to adjust an Armistice between the two parties, I hasten to inform you in accordance with instructions from His Excellency the President, that according to the suggestions made by you, the proper measures will be adopted on the part of this Government, to Ensure the Appointment of *two* Military Commissioners to meet those who may be appointed by Yourself at the Village of Laredo on the 25th day of September next, or near that time, to Engage in arranging the terms of an Armistice between the parties belligerent.

Orders have been issued in accordance with the proclamation of His Excellency the President of Texas, dated 15th June 1843 (a Copy of which is herewith enclosed) to the Officers Commanding the Forces of the Republic to cease hostilities against Mexico, and Commanding them to observe the requirements of the same.

Owing to the extent of uninhabited territory to the North, and the numerous obstacles which might, by possibility, intercept and cut off communications to the Troops to which you allude as composing the Santa Fé Expedition, they may not have received the proclamation and orders of the President in relation to the suspension of hostilities, to provide against and obviate the interposition of any obstacle from this Cause, to the successful issue of pending Negotiations between the two Governments. I enclose herewith a copy of the Order to Col. Charles A. Warfield revoking authority previously granted, and also an authenticated Copy of the Proclamation declaring an Armistice, with an order to Col. Jacob Snively endorsed thereon, that should those Officers with the forces under their Command, or either of them have appeared, or should in future appear on any portion of the frontier of Mexico, previous to the reception of similar orders through another Channel, you may have it in your power, and which it is hoped you will deem proper to Communicate to them, or either of them (as circumstances may require) these Orders, that they may in obedience thereto, immediately cease hostilities against the Mexican Republic with draw their Forces, and return to the interior Settlements of Texas.

I feel Confident that you will at once perceive the necessity of appointing the time for the meeting of the Commissioners on **the** part of the two Governments in September next, that the return

of the Troops of this Government, from the North, may be procured, and the Armies of the two Countries with drawn and ordered so as effectually to prevent Collision during the Convention, and ensure the preservation of the consequent suspension of hostilities

A reply at your earliest convenience is solicited, and the time suggested for the meeting of the Commissioners it is hoped will meet your approbation.

I avail myself of this occasion to tender you assurances of the very distinguished Consideration with which I have the honor to be.

Your most obedient Servant
The Secretary of War and Marine of
the Republic of Texas.

G. W. Hill.

A Copy.

Signed, Anson Jones.

ELLIOT TO DOYLE⁴¹

[Enclosure.].

Galveston July 30th 1843.

Extracts from a private letter
to Percy W. Doyle.

My dear Sir,

I have to thank you for your letter of the 8th Instant; and I hope the President will accede to General Santa Aña's arrangement with respect to the Armistice

I look for the answers from Washington by the 1st or 2d Proximo. I am sorry to find from your letter that General Santa Aña still adheres to this point of the acknowledgment of the Sovereignty of Mexico by Texas, not for the sake of Texas, be it understood, for as a matter of private opinion I have long since thought that if the Texians were to consult only *their interests*, they could not do better than to treat upon General Santa Aña's basis. All the advantages are to them, and all the risks and disadvantages (and they are great) are to Mexico. What the *people of Texas* will do, I cannot undertake to say, but it is likely that they will be mainly guided by the feeling in the United

⁴¹F. O., Texas, Vol 6.

States, and it seems quite probable that the arrangement will not be discouraged in that quarter. They would feel there, that it would be the firm and strengthening settlement of a United States population on the Mexican frontier with abundance of pretext to renew disturbances, and extend intrigue and pretensions Westward, as soon as it suited all their convenience to do so; and besides too, it would effectually break up the independence of Texas, which is extremely distasteful in the United States.

Lord Aberdeen's despatch to me of the 3rd Ultimo will place you in possession of the views of Her Majesty's Government at that date. It is much to be wished, (in furtherance of their disposition to be helpful in the adjustment of this Affair) that the Mexican Government may not insist upon the immediate and unqualified acknowledgement of the Sovereignty of Mexico as an indispensable preliminary condition to the opening of Negotiations, but Content itself with an expression of general readiness on the part of the Government maturely to consider any scheme of pacification proposed by Mexico.

General Santa Aña should have regard to the position and difficulties of this Government as well as his own, and if the parties can only agree upon a suitable point de depart in these negotiations I do not quite despair of a satisfactory result.

In considering the chances of such a Solution, it has sometimes occurred to me that if Mexico were to offer to admit the limits of Texas to the line of the Rio Grande, and to grant the Navigation of that river under rules to be agreed upon between the two Governments, that of itself might be a tempting inducement. With regard to the acknowledgment of the Sovereignty of Mexico I suppose the Vocabulary might furnish becoming means of tempering the bitterness of that form of speech. It might be sufficient for example if Texas would [insert] in the Articles of Convention that She was reunited to the Republic of Mexico, and that all Laws, and Decrees passed or issued by the Supreme Congress or Government not at variance with the conditions of the Convention, should be binding upon this Government and people of Texas. Another point of difficulty and delicacy is the treaty making power, and upon that Subject Her Majesty's Government will no doubt express their views at some early date.

Perhaps it would be possible to reconcile the difficulties and exi-

gencies in that respect by an article in the Convention agreeing upon the part of Mexico to the Commercial arrangements which Texas has contracted by treaty with foreign Powers, and further agreeing that Texas should continue to enjoy the rights of a Separate State for all purposes of foreign trade and Commercial intercourse, including the right to conclude and ratify future Conventions respecting foreign trade, and Commercial intercourse. But if Texas is to be left to regulate it's trade with other Powers as it sees fit, it follows of course that Mexico should be at liberty to consider Texas a foreign State, in respect to it's trade with Mexico, and an article in the Convention, providing for the regulation of this point from time to time according to altering circumstances by Commissioners appointed by the two Governments, would do all that was formally requisite in that respect. I say, formally, for to speak plainly, as soon as there is a State of peace upon the frontier, high tariffs in Mexico, and venal Officers, and active Smugglers on both Sides of the frontier will do all the rest for themselves.

Another point is the flag: In that particular it might be arranged that Texas should retain it's own flag within it's own territory, and on board of it's Merchant Vessels, except in the ports of Mexico, and that therein the Vessels of Texas should wear the flag of Mexico, but be subject to the duties and charges agreed upon in the Convention.

All these are of course mere speculations of my own, and I should particularly say to you that I have never had one word of Conversation with any Member of this Government upon such subjects, but still I have thought it may not be entirely useless to mention them to you. The Commissioners from this Government are Mr. Samuel Williams, and Colonel George Hockley, both of them I believe known to General Santa Aña. Mr. Williams however will be the active Commissioner. He is one of the original Settlers in Texas, and I should think one of the very few men in this country with sense and moderation enough sincerely to regret the Separation from Mexico.

I am persuaded that the Instructions will be as reasonable and as moderate as they can be, due regard being had to General Houston's position, and I am equally persuaded Mr. Williams will be found cordially disposed to do all He can to accomplish some

conclusion of this Affair upon a footing which ought to be satisfactory to the Mexican Government. But I cannot but repeat that General Houston's difficulties at home will be very great indeed; and General Santa Aña should have regard to them, and remember that it may be very easy to destroy his influence by unreasonable uncomplyingness at Mexico, and with it, all hope of a peaceful and moderate Settlement of this dispute.

Whilst I am upon the subject of modes of expression, may I use the freedom to suggest to you that it might be convenient if General Santa Aña and his Government would fall upon some mode of designating General Houston which may leave it in my power to place their communications before him. It cannot be expected of course that they should commit themselves to any tacit acknowledgment of the independence of this Republic by their modes of address, but *General* is not a term of commital, and *Señor Houston* is not a term of suitable respect. General Santa Aña owes General Houston becoming Military respect and courtesy, as well as deep personal gratitude, for he saved his life; and seeing that Her Majesty's Government, and the Government of The King of the French deal with General Houston as General, and President of Texas, I hope we shall hear no more of *Señor Houston* from Mexico. At all events I must decline to be the medium of any Communication from the Government of Mexico which speaks of him as *Señor Houston*, for I feel He would have a right to complain of me if I made myself a party to frivolous incivility of that kind. I observe that the Government of Mexico does speak of the Government of Texas, and therefore upon that score I have no remark to offer.

Galveston August 2d. 1843.

The despatches have just arrived from Washington, and I hope their contents will be satisfactory to the Mexican Government. I learn from Mr. Williams that General Houston wishes that Colonel Hockley and himself should perform the double office of Commissioners to General Woll, for the arrangement of the truce, and then go on to Mexico. Pray strenuously endeavour to persuade General Santa Aña to release the Texian prisoners. No measure would be better calculated to allay angry feeling, and

support the influence of the Govmt. for useful, and modern results.

Charles Elliot.

To Percy W. Doyle, Esqr.

Copy.

Charles Elliot.

[Endorsed.] Inclosure No 6 in Captain Elliot's Despatch to the Earl of Aberdeen. No. 22. August 3d. 1843.